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Ducks, Huskies continue fierce rivalry

The Oregon-Washington border war has heated up in recent seasons

By Allison Ross
Oregon Daily Emerald

When it comes to rivalries, the Pacific-10 Conference has a surplus. Oregon vs. Oregon State, Washington vs. Washington State, Arizona vs. Arizona State, and the list goes on.

But sometimes the rivalries go beyond the state lines.

When the Oregon football team hosts the Washington Huskies this Saturday, it will be a battle of the two winningest teams in the past five seasons in the Pac-10. With two losses apiece this year, only one team will emerge with its record intact. Oregon has recently dominated the series, winning three of the last four meetings. The Huskies, however, have the overall edge with a 55-31-5 record over the Ducks.

"It's a rivalry because it's love and hate in the Northwest," said senior Kevin Parker, who will be watching this season's battle from the sidelines with an ankle injury. "All the teams in the Northwest we don't like — Washington,

Washington State and Oregon State. We've beaten Washington the last few years, so it's a rivalry over that."

Oregon has only recently taken control of the series. Prior to 1994, when the Ducks won 31-20 at Autzen Stadium, the Huskies had won five straight games dating back to 1989. No other Pac-10 team has

UO vs. UW
ALLTIME:
Washington, 55-31-5
AT AUTZEN:
Washington, 9-6
IN THE 90s:
Washington, 5-3

dominated the Ducks like that in the 1990s.

"I think that the situations that

we've played Washington in with us going to the Cotton Bowl and the Rose Bowl have encouraged this rivalry," wide receiver Damon Griffin said. "Aside from the rivalry though, we just want to make up for last week."

With Oregon looking to make up for last week and Washington looking to do the same after a 33-10 drilling by Southern California, this season's game already has all the ingredients needed for an intense rivalry.

Add to the mix the fact that Oregon cornerback Eric Edwards' brother, Renard, will be on hand looking to help his team, the Huskies, and you've got not just a rivalry, but a family feud.

"It's become that border war between the two states," Eric Edwards said. "I wouldn't want to say it's bigger than the Oregon State rivalry, but it has definitely emerged to that level."

Perhaps there is no bigger rivalry than that of two in-state foes, but clearly the level of competition between Oregon and Washington has grown into something in the past few years — something that the fans, players and coaches cannot deny.

"It's a rivalry when it's competitive and when you believe you have a chance to win and the games mean something," Oregon head coach Mike Bellotti said. "No question, every game with Washington has all those flavors to it. The proximity of Oregon to Washington and the history of the rivalry and the intensity is great."

With bowl hopes still present for both teams, Saturday's game is sure to be as intense as any in-state game Oregon could ever play. Oregon will look to extend its domination of the past few years and Washington will be looking to regain control.

Maybe it's not the Civil War, but for the Oregon faithful, it's a war nonetheless.

"I think it's more for the fans," Oregon quarterback Akili Smith said. "A lot of people have said that this is bigger than the Civil War game."

Whether it is in fact bigger than the Civil War matchup remains a question, but there is no doubt that the battle of two Northwest powerhouses will not disappoint.



You may have to take your shirt off...but you won't lose it!

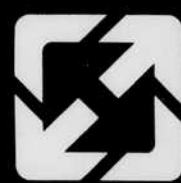
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